vernacular side of it. It is very much like a mint for mass production of coins, one set of teachers producing another set. The students are kept too long in the schools and come out at about the age of 18, fit neither for the field nor for the office. Every year, thousands of youngsters are turned out of the schools, all seeking employments as teachers or clerks, for which alone they themselves think they are fit. It is high time that some change is made in the system of education; otherwise the enormous amount now spent on education will not only be a waste but will be helping to injure the future of the younger generation. This is a very serious question and one to be gone into very carefully. I would request you, sir, to give your careful consideration to this matter.

(3) *Public Works.* This seems to be one of the neglected Departments of the State. The expenditure under this head in 1088 was Rs. 36,65,594 and in 1089 and 90 very nearly 38 lakhs. This year's revised estimate is Rs. 29,98,800 and the estimate for 1096, Rs. 28,79,100 *i. e.*, a decrease of about 10 lakhs compared to 1089 and 1090. Out of this, the amount allotted to communications is Rs. 6,60,000 for original works, and Rs. 6,50,000 for maintenance and repairs. The development of a country like Travancore depends to a great extent on its communications. The raw produce is to be brought down to the coast for marketing. The Southern Division, when compared to the Central and Northern Divisions, is, to some extent, provided with good roads. The road communication in the Northern Division is entirely inadequate, considering the development already made especially in the Hill Districts. Even the existing roads are badly neglected there, and it is very difficult to take even a bullock cart along most of the branch roads during the rainy season. The volume of traffic has increased ten times during the last 4 or 5 years, and this increase will go on rapidly. Cart hire has doubled since last year. There is a good amount of waste for want of communications. I will give one instance here. The cocoanut husk which is very nearly as valuable as the copra is now thrown away in all the Hill Districts for want of cheap transport. On an average 2000 cocoanuts will produce a candy of copra worth about Rs. 125 and the fibre from about 2500 husks will produce a candy of coir yarn which also will fetch very nearly Rs. 125 per candy. Thousands and thousands of rupees worth of husks are every month thrown away because there is no means to bring them down to the Lake Districts for soaking. The first and the most urgent work to be undertaken is the Railway connection between Quilon and Alwaye. Then come the construction of more roads and the proper maintenance of these roads for motor traffic. The present volume of traffic cannot be handled by bullock carts, and, wherever roads are in order, motor traffic will surely be introduced. Another suggestion I beg to bring to your kind consideration is the improvement of water communications. In almost all the Travancore rivers the fall from the foot hills to the sea is not very steep. Now, during the hot weather, boats can be taken only up to a certain point. Above that point, the river is shallow, and boats cannot pass during the hot months. I have heard that in France and other European countries the water level is kept up by means of collapsible bunds and locks and the rivers made navigable for small flat bottomed boats up to very nearly their very sources. If this could be done in Travancore it will be a great boon to the country. At least, it is worth a trial in one of the rivers, because, if it succeeds, it will in a way solve the very difficult problem of transport, especially in foot Hill Districts, where vast developments are now being made. Money spent on communications, if judiciously spent, is money well spent, which will help the material development of the country and indirectly repay the Government.

(4) *Agriculture and Industries.* These are two infant Departments which have to grow up and produce results yet.

A deficit or surplus at the end of a year is no test of the success of an administration. At the end of the civil war in America the debt of the United States was £ 50 crores. The first step of peace was not to repay this debt but to restore the economic future of the people, a step which cost another £30 crores making the total debt £80 crores, and the result was the most rapid recovery and extinction of debt that the world has ever known. Gladstone's idea of high finance is given by Lord Morley in his life as "the steadfast pursuit of the durable enlargement of the production power". I hope you will follow this principle."

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## THE ELECTRICITY BILL.

*Mr. Subba Ayar:—*

"Sir,

The next business in the agenda is the introduction of the Electricity Bill. The Bill has under Rule 32 been published in the Gazette with the previous sanction of the

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late Dewan. It has therefore become unnecessary for me to apply to the Council for leave to introduce it. Before formally introducing the Bill, I have, however, to bring to the notice of the Council that the Bill has appeared only in English and its Malayalam translation has not as yet been published. The Bill could not, strictly speaking, be introduced in the Council as Rule 33 requires that 15 days should elapse after the publication of the Bill in English and Malayalam. It is however open to the Council under Rule 67, to suspend any rule. As the Bill is likely to be non-contentious and as it is desirable to get through the first stage of the Bill at this meeting, I beg to move that Rule 33 be suspended and the Bill be introduced into the Council now."

Seconded by Mr. Rangaswami Aiyangar.

Carried.

*Mr. Subba Aiyar:—*

"Sir,

Rule 33 having been suspended, I now beg to introduce a Bill to regulate the supply and use of electricity. To enable the Council to discuss the main principle of the Bill I think it desirable to make a few remarks to explain the necessity for the Bill and the main provisions contained therein.

2. With the remarkable progress that science has made in various branches, our notions of comfort and convenience have also changed. We are no longer satisfied with our cocoanut or kerosine oil lamps or even with gas lights. Electric installation in every important city or town outside Travancore has aroused in us a desire to see that the various towns in Travancore are also lit with electricity. The Municipal Councils under existing conditions are not in a position to do the needful in the matter. Private enterprises for the purpose were wholly absent. We had therefore to wait. Fortunately for us, side by side with the industrial awakening that we see around us there has also grown a sense of responsibility in capitalists to invest money in undertakings likely to benefit themselves and the public. Capitalists are not wanting in Travancore to undertake electric installation and supply electrical energy to the public. It has therefore become necessary to undertake legislation to regulate the supply and use of electricity. In legislation of this kind, two objects have to be mainly kept in view. While it is necessary to protect persons who undertake electric installation from unnecessary interference and restraint and to allow them a sufficiently long time to get a good return upon their investments, it is equally necessary to safeguard the interests of the public and protect them from excessive charges or undue preferences. It is with these objects in view that the present Bill has been drafted and it follows closely the British Indian Electricity Act of 1910.

3. The Bill consists of 4 Parts and a Schedule. The first Part is only preliminary and deals mainly with definitions. The second Part deals with the supply of energy to the public and for that purpose with the grant and revocation of licenses and the rights and duties of licensees. Part III deals with the power of control of Government over unlicensed undertakings, while Part IV enables Government to frame rules for the purposes of the Regulation, and to constitute Advisory Boards. It also provides for punishment for offences under the Regulation. The Schedule details the rights and duties of the licensee and of the public and has to be considered as having been incorporated in the Regulation unless otherwise modified by the Regulation itself. The above are the main heads under which the various provisions are made in the Bill.

4. I will next explain some of the important provisions in the various Parts and in the Schedule. As has been already observed, Part I mainly deals with definitions and I need not detain the Council by enumerating them.

5. Passing on to Part II, it deals with the grant of licenses and revocations thereof. A license for supplying energy may be granted to any person or to a local authority such as a Municipal Council. In the latter case the license applied for should be supported by a resolution of the local authority passed at a special meeting for the purpose and after due notice. In either case certain formalities have to be observed. Clause 3 therefore enacts that a notification of the intention to get a license detailing the terms on which a license is to be applied for has to be published in the prescribed manner by the licensee. Objections to the grant of a license may be made by any person or by a local authority within 3 months of the notification. After considering the various objections, if any, the Government may grant a license subject to such terms and conditions as the Government may deem fit to impose.

6. After the license is granted the licensee has to make reasonable progress in the undertaking. If he fails to do so or if he breaks any of the conditions of the license or by reason of insolvency or for other causes mentioned in Clause 4, the licensee is unable

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to perform the work or to discharge his duties and obligations, the license may under that Clause be revoked.

7. The effect of revocations is mentioned in Clause 5. When a license is revoked it shall be open to a local authority to purchase the undertaking. It is given the right of first refusal. If it is not in a position to purchase the undertaking any person may purchase the same and if there is no purchaser the Government may purchase it. The rights of the purchaser are safeguarded by the provision that the purchaser takes the property free from all debts, mortgages or other obligations, as such debts, mortgages or obligations will attach only to the purchase money and not to the undertaking *itself*.

8. Clause 7 is an important one. It enables the licensee to continue for any length of time without a renewal of the license. At the same time it is thought desirable that the people who consume electricity should be afforded an opportunity to have the right to control the undertaking. The elected representatives of the people form the majority in all Municipal Councils and they will be in the majority even in Local Boards that may be constituted. Though under existing conditions it may not be possible for a local authority to take up the responsibility of financing the undertaking, it may after a considerable length of time be in a position to purchase the same. At any rate they may do so if they are so minded. A local authority is therefore given under Clause 7 the option to purchase the undertaking at the expiration of a period not exceeding 50 years as may be specified in the license. If at the expiry of the period mentioned in the license the local authority is not in a position to purchase the undertaking, it may exercise the right at the end of every succeeding period not exceeding twenty years. Thus then the licensee may continue as long as he likes without taking a fresh renewal and the local authority may purchase if it is inclined to do so after a period ordinarily of 50 years.

9. For obvious reasons Clause 9 requires that the licensee should not assign the license or transfer his undertaking without the previous sanction of Government. Any contravention of the provisions contained in this Section will make the assignment or transfer void.

10. Clause 10 empowers the Government to vary the terms and conditions upon which and the periods on the expiration of which the licensee is bound to sell the undertaking. In the light of experience or of subsequent events which could not be foreseen it may be desirable to have a modification. Power has therefore been reserved to Government to modify the term of the license.

11. Clause 11 contains a wholesome provision in that it requires the licensee to render accounts at the end of every year so as to enable the Government to know whether any of the terms and conditions of the license or the period or the charges mentioned in the license require any revision both in the interests of the licensee and in the interests of the consumer.

12. Clauses 12 to 19 deal with the right of the licensee to break up streets and other places for placing electric supply-lines. The procedure to be followed in the exercise of such right and the safeguards to be made by him are all detailed in these Clauses.

13. Clause 20 gives a right of entry in and inspection of any premises after due notice for the purpose of testing the supply-lines and for ascertaining the amount of energy.

14. Clause 23 requires the licensee not to show any undue preference to any person in the matter of the charge for energy. He is however under Clause 24 empowered to stop supply if he is not paid.

15. The other provisions in this Part need not be particularly mentioned.

16. We have seen that under Part II no person could supply electricity unless he takes out a license. This however may work some hardship in the case of small undertakings. The owner of a house or factory may have his own electric installation. He may also be in a position to supply his neighbour or if there are two adjacent clubs like the European Club and the Union Club at Trivandrum one of the clubs may be willing to supply electricity for itself and be willing to supply its neighbour. There may be a factory generating electricity and may desire to supply electricity for the officers' houses and cooly lines of the factory on the opposite side of the road. In all these cases, if the Government are of opinion that insisting on a license will cause undue expense or delay they may accord sanction to supply electricity. Before according sanction the consent of the licensee should be obtained and if the licensee withholds his consent unreasonably the Government may grant the sanction ignoring him. There are however some restrictions imposed on these persons. The supply of energy should not be made to a place where more than one hundred members meet or to a factory and the rate at which energy is

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supplied should not exceed 250 watts or 1/3 of horse power. Thus, then there are provisions on the one hand to encourage separate installations for one's own house, while at the same time provision is made that such persons do not unduly compete with the licensee.

17. Part IV enables the Government to constitute Advisory Boards. If there are many electric undertakings then the Government will be in a position to have the advice of electrical experts. If they are in a position to do so they may have an Advisory Board. As at present it may be very difficult to get the requisite number of experts, the provision in the Regulation is only permissive.

18. The provisions in the Schedule are also important. The licensee is bound to complete the works within the time stipulated in the license. To ensure the due completion of the works it is open to the Government to demand security from the licensee. If the works are completed within the stipulated time the security will be released. But if the licensee fails to do so the security will be forfeited. The annual statement of accounts has to be examined and audited by an Auditor appointed by Government before the same is submitted to Government. The licensee is bound to supply energy anywhere within the area if an undertaking is given to him by those interested in such supply that he will get a reasonable return and that the supply of energy will be taken for at least two years. The licensee is not allowed to charge for the energy supplied more than what is fixed in the license. It is however open to Government to revise the rates at the end of seven years. There may be subsequent revisions of the rates at the end of 5 years.

19. The other provisions do not call for any specific mention.

20. I have now explained the main provisions of the Bill. I have no doubt that the Council will be convinced that the provisions are perfectly harmless and I hope the measure will be non-contentious. I therefore beg to move that the principle of the Bill be affirmed."

Seconded by Mr. Rangaswami Aiyangar.

Carried.

Mr. Subba Aiyar then moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Kunjan Pillai, Raman Tampi, G. Parameswaran Pillai and Narayanan Pandalay and the Mover to report within two months.

Seconded by Mr. Nidiry.

Carried.

## THE ESTATES' RENT RECOVERY REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

*Mr. Subba Aiyar:*—

"Sir,

I beg to introduce a Bill to amend the Estates' Rent Recovery Regulation, IV of 1068. Under this Regulation, the Estates mentioned therein, *viz.*, the Edapalli and Kilimanur Estates, are given the privilege of having their rent recovered under the Revenue Recovery Regulation. If the rent roll and other accounts are kept in the form in which Government accounts are kept and if any default in the payment of revenue is made by a tenant, the Estates report the matter to Government Revenue officers and action is taken under the Revenue Recovery Regulation. Sometimes, it so happens that in giving the names of the defaulters or other particulars required under the rules, the Estates make mistakes, with the result that recovery is made in cases where there is no default. The Government are in consequence put to loss by way of defending suits which are filed against them, and sometimes, refunding the amount recovered. Section 7 of the Regulation enacts that, if in connection with any proceedings taken under Section 6, Government have to incur charges and losses, such charges and losses should be paid by the Estates. But the Section does not say how they have to be recovered. The result is that, if there is a default in making good the expenses incurred by Government, the Government should necessarily have recourse to a suit. The charges and losses are incurred in proceedings taken for and on behalf of the Estates. It is not desirable that such charges should be recovered by a separate suit. The amendment now suggested is to the effect that the Government may recover such charges and losses from the Estates summarily as if they are arrears of land revenue without being driven to a Civil suit for the purpose. With these words, I beg to move that the principle of the Bill be affirmed."

*President:*—"I believe that the provision in the Bill is meant to cover also the cost incurred by Government in respect of proceedings taken by them for the recovery of those rents. The Government depute their Establishment to recover those rents and they must be in a position to recover the costs of such Establishment. Perhaps the amendment will enable the Government to do so."

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